



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

600 S Walnut / P.O. Box 25
Boise, Idaho 83707

C.L. "Butch" Otter / Governor
Virgil Moore / Director

January 16, 2018

Keith Lannom
Forest Supervisor, Payette National Forest
500 North Mission Street
McCall, Idaho 83638

Dear Mr. Lannom:

I am responding to your letter dated December 13, 2017 requesting whether the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) would grant the U.S. Forest Service an easement across Department property within the South Fork of the Salmon River drainage to facilitate recreational access along the Davis Ranch Road.

As you are aware, the Department is a strong advocate for managing access on federal lands; to provide for recreational access for hunting, fishing, and trapping while addressing other natural resource needs such as stream sedimentation and ungulate vulnerability.

The Department property the Davis Ranch Road crosses was originally purchased in 1948 using Wildlife Restoration Program funds. According to federal regulation 50 CFR 80, an agency must not lose control of interest in the property purchased with Wildlife Restoration Program funds, nor shall the property be used for purposes inconsistent with the original purpose for which the property was required. The South Fork Salmon River properties were purchased to provide primitive area big game winter range.

The Department has been an active participant in the Big Creek-Yellow Pine-South Fork Collaborative (Collaborative) and we have previously commented on the proposed Davis Ranch Road proposal. Consistent with Collaborative recommendations, and our previous comments, the Department would support allowing non-motorized access across our property for recreational purposes, and we would support granting motorized access via ATV to private property (Fritser Ranch) by the owners.

However, because of the complexities and uncertainty of granting real property interest (easement) of lands purchased with Wildlife Restoration Program funds, our preference is to grant the necessary access and trail maintenance permissions through use of long-term cooperative agreements.

Keeping Idaho's Wildlife Heritage

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If obtaining access through cooperative agreement is a reasonable solution to meet U.S. Forest Service needs, please work directly with Brad Compton, Regional Supervisor Southwest Region, in our Nampa office (208-465-4685).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Virgil Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Virgil Moore
Director

CC: Brad Compton, Gregg Servheen, Don Kemner, IDFG